

**Friends of the Little Miami State Park**  
**General Board Meeting 4-12-2023**  
**MS Teams Video Conference**  
**Meeting Agenda & Presentation with minutes**

**Minutes**

**Motions**

**Actions**

**AGENDA / STRATEGIC PLAN.**

1. Introductions
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Treasurer's Report
4. ODNR Report
5. FLMSP Administrative Business
6. Volunteer Management
7. Condition & Drainage
8. Amenities/Convenience
9. Beauty
10. Outreach
11. Safety

**Call to Order:** Dick Feldmann

**Introduction of Board:**

|                  |                 |         |
|------------------|-----------------|---------|
| Dick Feldmann    | President       | Present |
| Ron Gorley       | Vice President  |         |
| Becky Retzer     | Treasurer       | Present |
| Bill Brown       | Secretary       | Present |
| Larry Bloomfield | Member at Large | Present |
| Bruce Cortright  | Member at Large | Present |
| Fritz Buschmann  | Member at Large | Present |
|                  |                 |         |
| Mike Norman      | ODNR            | Present |
| Casey Marcum     | ODNR            |         |

**Introduction of Members and Guests:**

- Linda Buschmann
- Rick Forrester
- Diane Wright, Buckeye Trail Association Present
- Tom McCray Present

**Approval of Minutes:** Bill Brown

- March Board Meeting, distributed March 14<sup>th</sup>.
  - Motions made by board via email since last meeting added to March 8 minutes
  - Minutes posted to FLMSP shared drive.

- Move to approve

**MOTION: Bill made a motion to approve amended Mar. 8th minutes.**

**Dick seconded.**

**Motion approved.**

**Treasurer's Report:** Becky Retzer

| FLMSP CASH ON HAND          | 02/28/23       | 03/31/23       |              |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Unrestricted                | 133,782        | 130,036        | -3,746       |
| Restricted                  | 19,364         | 19,207         | -157         |
| Morrow Rest & Info Station  | 7,944          | 7,687          |              |
| Grandin Rest & Info Station | 10,000         | 10,000         | 0            |
| Steve Murphy Memorial       | 1,420          | 1,520          | 100          |
| Reserved                    | 259            | 259            | -            |
| Pollinator Garden           | 259            | 259            | -            |
| Savings Account             | 102,506        | 102,513        | 7            |
| Receivables                 | 124            | 0              | -124         |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>153,529</b> | <b>149,502</b> | <b>-4027</b> |

**Treasurer Narrative:** Becky Retzer

- Financial Statements for March sent to board on April 10th
- 2022 Year-end finalized – need to take to Ferman & Co.
- Expenditures:
  - Tractor Supply- trailer 1,699.99
  - Miami Valley Power Equipment – (2) ODNr chainsaws 700.00
  - April: Smith-Feike-Minton, Cincinnati Insurance Co.
  - Directors & Officers Policy (last year) 1,250.00
  - Quickbooks 75.00
- Renew Home Depot Tax exempt status
- Renew Nonprofit status with Ohio (due by 7/26/2023)

**MOTION: Becky motioned that we allocate up to \$1,500 for D&O Insurance.**

**Dick seconded.**

**Motion approved.**

**Special Guest,** Diane Wright, Buckeye Trail Association

- Diane thanked the FLMSP members and volunteers for making the part of the Buckeye Trail that runs along the LMSP the nicest section of the entire Buckeye Trail!
- June 3rd is Buckeye Trail National Trail Day. All sections of the trail will be hiked by different volunteers on the same day. LMSP is part of the Buckeye Trail. Diane represents the section of the trail from Eden Park in Cincinnati to Loveland on the LMSP trail.

- She is arranging volunteer hikers/bikers to cover this section of the trail on June 3rd. She has 40% of her section covered so far. She is asking for more volunteers who can contact her if they would like to sign up.
- Someone suggested adding this event to the FLMSP Trail Mail. Diane will write up an item and submit it to Janet by the April 14th deadline for the next issue.

**ODNR, Mike Norman, Casey Marcum**

### Staffing

- Mike Norman, Park Manager
- Casey Marcum, Trail Maintenance Lead
- Carol Foell, Mowing
- New hire, Mowing
- Mandy Wolski, Naturalist is transferring to Deer Creek State Park
  - Going away lunch April 20<sup>th</sup> 12:00-1:00 Cowan Lake Park Office
- O'Bannon Bridge closure will now start on Oct. 1, 2023.
- Mike has monthly sessions with Casey to tour the trail to discuss and review trail conditions, work completed and work needed.
- There is a notable difference in the condition of the area surrounding the trail on the north section vs. the south due to the greater number of volunteers in the south. Mike and Casey requested volunteers spend some time on the northern section to clear the berm in preparation for the mowing crews to begin mowing.
- Rick Forrester's crew is working on the north section this week to clear the trail for mowing.
- Mike says there will be less mowing on the trail this year. It will still be maintained properly, but there will be longer periods between mowings
- QR code scanning at kiosks to obtain trail maps and information should be considered vs. printing of hardcopy brochures. Brochures will continue to be provided, but the more sustainable, environmental and economical QR coding scanning should be promoted.
- FLMSP Volunteer T-shirt order was stalled, but Mike is making it a priority to make them available.
- All FLMSP volunteers need to have an updated application on file.
- Dick sent the update FLMSP MOU to Mike a few weeks ago. Mike will check email and review the MOU and the edits Dick made to it.
- Mike said he requested a John Deer JD50G Excavator and has budgeted \$72,000. He hopes to have the purchase approved.
- Mike spoke about ODNR inclusiveness culture, policy and practices. These values are not talking points, but instead are being made part of the ODNR culture.
- Safety is ODNR's priority and will not be compromised. Mike asked any safety concerns to be reported.
- Casey will have a mowing new hire soon.
- Dick and Becky will be attending Mandy Wolski's going away lunch April 20th.

- Casey would like to store the ODNR Gator, used to travel the trail to manage work, at the Roxanna tool cache. The cache dimensions were checked and the trail blower and Gator will both fit while allowing either to be pulled out when needed. Cache is 12' wide and 28' deep. There are only 5 keys to the cache (3-blower crews, 1-Rich, 1-Dick) which satisfied Mike that the Gator will be secure in the cache and left the final decision where to store it to Casey and FLMSF.
- Casey has asked about using the FLMSF blower for mowing prep. Tom McCray is OK with this as long as it is refueled and ready when we need it. This also applies to using the south blower stored at the Foster's cache.
- Insurance issues were raised and FRitz said our policy will cover all permissible use.
- ODNR is working through new and old encroachment issues on the trail, some of which involve the Monkey Bar and Grill. They will try to work them out with the property owners, but will then proceed to written notice, direct contact via a call and then legal action if they cannot be resolved.
- We thanked Mike for the quick ODNR legal review of the proposed Chronolog crowdsourced timelapse project, which he said they have no issues with if we proceed.

#### Clearing of Berm and mower path

- Request volunteers start clearing the berm of tree litter in preparation for mowing season.

#### ODNR use of Roxanna tool cache

- Casey has asked if she could store a gator at the Roxanna Tool cache so that it would be available and handy when they need it.
- Tom McCray is checking dimensions and design so that the gator and blower can coexist and both easily reach the door without blocking each other.

#### O'Bannon bridge

- Ohio State Representative Jean Schmidt (R-Loveland) has published that "the Little Miami Scenic Trail Bridge in Loveland will remain open through the summer." "After meeting with members of ODNR it was decided that the repair would be moved to the fall."
- ODNR published press release on April 10<sup>th</sup> (forwarded to the board). It states "Construction is expected to begin in October and last into the spring."



#### Morrow trees

- Mike indicated that additional trees are schedule for removal in Morrow. Because trees are into power lines, working with AES Ohio.

#### King Ave/Grandin Rd/Peters Cartridge factory

- Trail Closure at Peters Cartridge
- From Warren County website:

“Anticipated Construction Duration: March 2022 – December 2023”

#### **“Trail Impacts:**

A portion of the Little Miami Scenic Bike Trail at the Grandin Road crossing is currently closed and will remain closed for 2023. The Peter’s Cartridge Factory Apartments and Cartridge Brewing can still be accessed from the southwest on the trail. *This paragraph from latest Warren County Engineer web site.*

#### Trail slip South of Isaac Walton

- No change

#### Trail slip at MM 22, I-71 Jeremiah Morrow Bridge

- No change
- Mike, ODNr Engineers and ODOT continuing discussions a long-term solution to correct the issue.

### **FLMSP ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS**

#### **Annual Meeting**, Dick Feldmann

- Will occur on Sunday May 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:30-6:30 at Waldenschmidt Homestead
  - 7567 Glendale Milford Rd, Camp Dennison, Ohio (same as last year)
- Will include donated dinner.

- Asking the board to sign up for a dish to bring for about 30 people.

### **Board Membership, Dick Feldmann**

- Dick Feldmann, President 2022-2023, will run for two more years (2023-2025)
- Ron Gorley agreed to be Vice President until May 2024, completing Steve's term.
- Bill Brown, Secretary 2022-2024
- Becky Retzer, Treasurer 2022-2023, will run for two more years (2023-2025)
- Bruce Cortright 2021-2023, will run for two more years (2023-2025)
- Larry Bloomfield 2022-2024
- Fritz Buschmann 2022-2024

### Membership Management

- Fund raising e-mail went out Early April
  - List came from Quick Books
  - Request went through Constant Contact
- Issues:
  - Have list from Janet on Constant Contact identified bad e-mail
  - Have about half dozen donors indicating they donated this year already

### Trail Counter Program, Ron Gorley

- Final count for 2022 is 1,481,651 person visits (down 27% from 2021).
- Permanent counter
  - New data logger is on route from France. Expected in Cincinnati imminently. We will schedule a date to install it once it arrives.
- Counter will be moved from North of Loveland to South of Loveland
- Tri-State Trails have provided invoices. Expenses, approved in previous board meetings, have been paid.

### Non-discrimination and Anti-harassment Policy

- Ron updated policy to be more appropriate for our organization.
- Sent out for board approval March 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Policy was accepted with four approvals and three abstentions.
- This motion was documented as an amendment to last month's board meeting minutes.
- Any other questions or comments before we publish the policy?

### Records Retention, Becky Retzer

- Becky is working on updates to files that can be electronically saved versus boxes of hard copies. Currently cleaning out some old files.

## **VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT**

### Spring Volunteer Event, Linda Buschmann

- Pizza Party for volunteers occurred April 8<sup>th</sup> at the Monkey Bar. Approximately 32 volunteers attended. Melody DeCarlo, Monkey Bar Historian did a presentation on the Monkey Bar and Sam the monkey for which the bar is named.

### Proposed Future Volunteer Events, Linda Buschmann

- Linda is looking for feedback and choice recommendations from the board.

- Summer Grill out
  - June 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - Morrow Veterans Memorial Park or Caesar Creek shelter.
  - Grill out
    - Burgers and Hot Dogs provided by FLMSF
    - Volunteers bring one side dish or dessert.
    - Proposed budget \$400
  - Chipotle
    - Proposed budget \$800
  - For the summer grill out, there was a preference shown for the Burgers and Hot Dogs over Chipotle, but not a strong preference.
  - People were interested in where the Morrow Veterans Memorial Park was located.
  - Morrow Veterans Memorial Park is preferred so volunteers can visit work done at Phegley Park.
  - If we talk to Caroline she may be able to get us more tables by the railroad station to have it closer to Phegley.
- Fall Volunteer Recognition Picnic
  - September 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup>.
  - Caesars Creek or Greene County Fairground Recreation Center, Xenia
  - Food to be donated by vendors
  - Budget, \$200 for paper products utensils, condiments, etc.
  - The fall volunteer recognition picnic was supported by the board.
  - Neither Caesar Creek or Greene County Fairground was preferred because of the distance.
  - Morgan's Campground was agreed to be a great location.
- Holiday Party
  - December 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>.
  - Little River Bar and Grill in Oregonia
    - Proposed budget \$750-\$1000
  - Raffels Catering, 10160 Reading Road
    - Proposed budget \$1500-1700
  - The Holiday Party was approved by the board. They expressed a preference of the Little River Bar and Grill because it is on the trail and they want to support businesses on the trail.

#### Volunteer Committee, Dick Feldmann

- John Biederman has stepped down from his role as Volunteer Coordinator.
- Committee now consists of
  - Becky Retzer: Volgistics
  - Don Schweitzer: ODNR volunteer agreement management
  - Linda Buschmann: Volunteer Appreciation
  - Dick Feldmann, Fritz Buschmann: Support and Volunteer Contact
  - All: Volunteer on-boarding

#### Volgistics, Becky Retzer, Fritz Buschmann

- Fritz Buschmann has updated the 2022 hours from the website into Volgistics.

- Total hours for 2022:
- Fritz is currently contacting volunteers who have no hours listed and/or ODNR forms (A-G)
- Goal is to contact all volunteers in database by end of March and delete those who are no longer interested.
- Goal to get a volunteer initial contact policy in place.
  - Currently John Biederman is using Volgistics to contact those who submit an on-line application.
  - Need to follow up with a phone call and to encourage ODNR forms to be completed.
- Received 3 new volunteer applications.
- Becky calls new applicants and sends them the ODNR Volunteer Application form.
- Becky will send work crew leaders the new applicants list and leaders should invite them to the next work session.
- Leaders should notify Becky or Dick if they have a volunteer not on the list.

## **TRAIL CONDITION & DRAINAGE**

### Prep for Mowing, Dick Feldmann

- Casey has requested that volunteers prepare the berms for mowing by removing tree litter.
- South half is already in good shape.
- Rick Forrester's Thursday crew will start at Morrow and head north for several Thursdays.
- Dick Feldmann has reached out to Far North volunteers. They will start at Hedges and head south.

## **AMENITIES/CONVENIENCE**

### Spring Valley, Dick Feldmann

- The portable restroom and decorative enclosure burned down March 19<sup>th</sup>.
- We're assuming vandalism. Fire department came. The items were a total loss and appropriate police reports have been made.
- Information kiosk had minor damage due to the heat.
- Will follow up with Spring Valley ACTS to discuss whether we can/should replace.

### Morrow, Dick Feldmann, Becky Retzer

- Rest and information station going into Phegley Park in 2023 paid for by Appletree Pet Clinic.
- Status – kiosk & bench
  - Bench has arrived and will be installed this spring.
  - The kiosk posts have been planted and the framing has begun
- Status – trees
  - Becky working with Greenfield Farms and Village of Morrow on plantings.
  - Here is a list of trees or shrub like trees that Bill Newton (Owner of Greenfield farms is recommending)

- Redbud, Cornus Florida (Dogwood), Service Berry, Aronia Melancarpa (Black Chokeberry) All of these natives have attractive blooms and some have beautiful fall colors. The Service Berry and Black Chokeberry not only have white blooms in the spring but also berries (birds will love) and showy fall foliage.
- Along the areas across from the restroom he suggests, Nyssa Sylvatica (Black Gum) which has a strong tap root (grows down - not out) This native tree also can deal with the heat from the pavements (trail & parking area). Not much to the spring flowers, has spectacular coloring in fall with a deep purple berry.
- All of his recommendations are hardy and disease resistant.
- Estimate for trees is \$3,500 if we plant them and \$5,000 if we have the nursery plant them.
- Bill Newton, Greenfield Farms, recommends if we don't plant them in the next two weeks, we should wait until fall.

**MOTION: Becky made a motion to spend up to \$5,000 for trees and bushes per the recommendations above.**

**Dick seconded**

**Motion approved.**

**MOTION: Becky made a motion to spend up to \$850 for pollinator garden at trailhead in Morrow.**

**Fritz seconded**

**Motion approved.**



Portable Restrooms, Dick Feldmann

- Transition to summer restrooms occurred first week of April.

## BEAUTY

### Pollinator Gardens, Becky Retzer, Rick Forrester

- MM 19.9 Oregonia has been seeded.
- MM 39 under power lines was seeded March 2nd

### Park Entry Signs, Dick Feldmann

- Proposing new signage at all entry points.
- Currently surveying every intersection (46 intersections, two set of entry signs at each intersection) and creating a pictorial inventory of the signs at the intersections. Have completed capturing pictures of every intersection.

## OUTREACH

### Ohio Trails Advocacy Day, Dick Feldmann

- March 29th, Ohio Statehouse, Columbus
- Dick attended. Met with 7 state representatives (or their aides), as well as ODNR Director Mertz. Also met with leadership and representatives of other trail organizations including Tri-State Trails, Bike Miami Valley, Great Parks of Hamilton County, Buckeye Trail Association, CORA.

### CORA Bike & Trail Expo, Fritz Buschmann

- Cincinnati Off-Road Alliance
- March 11, 2023 at MadTree Brewing
- Suggestion to have a table at next year's event
- Trek Store in Blue Ash and ODNR had tables at the event.
- Tables cost \$75.

### 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Scenic River designation of the Little Miami River,

Dick Feldmann

- June 10<sup>th</sup>, Washington Mill Park, Bellbrook, Ohio
- Dick Feldmann will be supporting ODNR display table with Mike Norman

## SAFETY

## FUTURE GENERAL BOARD MEETINGS

May Meeting will be Annual General Membership Meeting on Sunday May 7<sup>th</sup> 4:30-6:30 at Waldenschmidt Homestead. No general board meeting will occur in May.

June General Board Meeting will be Wednesday June 14<sup>th</sup>, 7:00-8:30 PM on MS Teams.

**MOTION: Dick made a motion to adjourn.**

**Fritz seconded.**

**Meeting adjourned.**